

Contributed

A NEW SONG.

By Margaret H. Barnett.

Why not sing some of the songs of earth,
The hymns which we so love to hear;
Through all the changing scenes of time,
The songs that have grown so dear?

They tell of things which shall be unknown,
In that "far away home of the soul."
What need to sing, when at anchor safe,
Of "billows that near us roll"?

The endless years of that beautiful land
Will not be a "transient dream";
And who would sing, by the River of Life,
Of "Death's cold, sulien stream"?

Naught will be heard of Earth's strife, in the song
Which the ransomed shall sing above.
'Twill be a hymn of joy and praise,
A song of redeeming love.

And the minor strains will be heard no more,
Which here they have sung so long;
When, in a land where all is new,
They shall sing the glad "New Song."

THE DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH.

By Rev. Thos. E. Converse, D. D.

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Discipline in all Ages of the Church.

In the earliest ages of the Church, discipline was lodged in the head of the family. Abraham ordered his household both in the way of training and of admonition and of admission to the sacrament of circumcision. So did Isaac and Israel. At the present day God has committed the first form of discipline, the training in righteousness, to the parent. While the pastor may assist the father and mother, the chief responsibility for this form of discipline still remains with the parent.

The second of these, the duty of admonition, to those who err from the right, is placed by the Lord jointly with the parent and the officers of the Church. In this these officers of the Church ordinarily act individually. One of the most vivid illustrations of this is found in I. Kings, 1:6. Adonijah was the one of David's sons, of whom it is written, "His father had not displeased him at any time in saying, Why hast thou done so?" And Adonijah brought the bitterest sorrow upon the gray head of his father.

The third form of discipline, official censure, is by God entrusted not at all to the parent, but to the elders of the Church acting collectively. In Matthew 18:17, we read concerning offences, "If he neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church; but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican. . . . For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." That is official exclusion.

Discipline Has Always Been Needed.

Have we ever paused to consider the number of instances that are recorded in the Bible in which God

personally disciplined some of his people and put it on record? It would seem as if God would impress on us the fact that all his children need chastisement and that he "scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."

1. Ham and Canaan. They insulted their father, Noah, grossly and lustfully. God replied, "Cursed be Canaan, a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren."

2. Job was one of the most consecrated of God's children. God described him as one that feareth God and escheweth evil. But even he could be elevated by discipline. It was severe discipline. But it enabled Job to say (42:5), "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eyes seeth thee, wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes."

3. Abraham. In Egypt and in Gerar he represented Sarah as his sister, concealing the fact that she was his wife. God disciplined by coming in a dream to Pharaoh, and bidding the king of Egypt who was outside of the covenant to rebuke the father of the faithful.

4. When Jacob obtained the blessing by deceit, God disciplined him with twenty years of exile from home.

5. Moses was ordered to speak to the rock. See the record in the twentieth chapter of Numbers. Instead of speaking, he smote the rock. God disciplined him by barring him from a personal entrance into the land of Canaan.

6. Jonah was ordered to go to Nineveh and preach. He refused and God sent a storm which even the heathen sailors recognized as discipline. Again, after his preaching to Nineveh, and the repentance of the people, Jonah showed an evil temper. God again rebuked him with the words, "Should not I spare Nineveh?"

7. Elijah murmured against God. "Now, oh Lord, take away my life, for I am not better than my fathers." Very gentle was the rebuke, when the Lord sent an angel with bread and water, and the message, "Arise and eat."

8. Of all the consecrated workers on earth, Paul stands prominent. Yet even he needed correction and God gave him discipline. In the twelfth of second Corinthians we read of his thorn in the flesh, which was sent to buffet him.

9. Strangest of all, we read in the fifth of Hebrews that God disciplined his own Son, Jesus Christ. In that chapter we read that "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." Was not this discipline? True the sinless one needed no censure. Yet this verse tells us that by discipline the character of the man Jesus was elevated. Do we desire an illustration of this? In the eleventh of Matthew we see Jesus suffering under the rejection of his message, both by the Jews, by the people of Capernaum, and by the wise and prudent, until his chastened spirit cried, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."

If even the man Jesus needed discipline, let no Church court say that discipline is unnecessary in this twentieth century.